

# NPL Site Narrative for Love Canal

## LOVE CANAL

### Niagara Falls, New York

**Federal Register Notice:** [September 8, 1983](#)

**Conditions at listing (October 1981):** Love Canal is a 16-acre landfill in the southeast corner of the City of Niagara Falls, New York, about 0.3 mile north of the Niagara River. In the 1890s, a canal was excavated to provide hydroelectric power. Instead, it was later used by Hooker Electrochemical for disposal of over 21,000 tons of various chemical wastes. Dumping ceased in 1952, and in 1953 the disposal area was covered and deeded to the Niagara Falls Board of Education. Extensive development occurred near the site, including construction of an elementary school and numerous homes.

Problems with odors and residues, first reported at the site during the 1960s, increased in the 1970s as the water table rose, bringing contaminated ground water to the surface. Studies indicate that numerous toxic chemicals have migrated into surrounding areas. Run-off drains into the Niagara River at a point 2.8 miles upstream of the intake tunnels for Niagara Falls' water treatment plant, which serves about 77,000 people. At this discharge point, the river sediment has also become contaminated.

Between 1977 and 1980, New York State and the Federal government spent about \$45 million at the site: \$30 million for relocation of residents and health testing, \$11 million for

environmental studies, and \$4 million for a demonstration grant (under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act) to build a leachate collection and treatment system.

**Status (July 1983):** A study completed in 1982 recommended construction of a slurry wall and cap to contain ground water in the site as the long-term solution.

In July 1982, EPA awarded a \$6,995,000 Cooperative Agreement to New York for (1) construction of a slurry wall and cap, (2) four feasibility studies, and (3) a long-term monitoring study to determine seasonal variations in ground water levels and leaching. In September 1982, \$892,800 was added to (1) demolish the school, (2) install a synthetic membrane over a temporary clay cap, and (3) erect a fence. Construction of the slurry wall and cap is scheduled to be completed in the fourth quarter of 1983, and the feasibility studies in the third quarter of 1983.

The Department of Justice, on behalf of EPA, has brought a Federal civil action seeking injunctive relief against parties potentially responsible for wastes associated with the site.

*[The description of the site (release) is based on information available at the time the site was evaluated with the HRS. The description may change as additional information is gathered on the sources and extent of contamination. See [56 FR 5600](#), February 11, 1991, or subsequent FR notices.]*